1: Meek E, G-5 (1925-1930) 1931
FF38 Katab FF38

844 base. The cord was in former times planted with a seed yam and the spot marked. When the yam grew up it was pounded [824] and given to the child to eat, in the belief that it would add to his strength. The stump of the cord is licked constantly for a few days by the midwife, who uses mouthfuls of hot water. No beliefs are attached to the placenta, which is buried at the 845 back of the house. Twins are not considered unlucky. Nor are 847 albinoes. But idiotic or deformed children were taken to the bush and abandoned. The mother's abdomen is swathed in 853 string bandages, which she continues to wear throughout the weaning period, the intention being to preserve the figure. She [171] also keeps her body regularly smeared with red earth, as this is believed to be good for her milk. This custom is widespread in Nigeria, being found, e.g. among the Kare-kare of Bornu. The original object of the practice was probably to ward off evil influences, but it serves as a public announcement that she is weaning a child, an announcement which is advisable, as a [833] woman may not have sexual relations during the lactation period, which among the Katab is reckoned as three years, a rule which must act as a check on sub-marriages.

553 A name for the child may be chosen by the father, mother, or relative. There is no fixed rule. A friend, or even a stranger staying in the house at the time of the birth, may ask that his name may be given to the child. Parents commonly confer the names of dead relatives, such as a grandfather or grandmother's or father's brother. Or the name given may have reference to some accidental circumstance at the time of birth. Thus a man called his daughter "Matan Malam", i.e. wife of a "malam"[1] because a "malam" was staying in his house on the day she was born. He called another daughter "Ladi" because she was born on Sunday.[2] One mother called her third daughter Kadayinkina, "You know I was right", as a reproof to a rival wife. Some common names are Ayashim (Friend of man), Tado (The Strong), Kaza (God), Duniya (Experience of the World). The name is assigned two days after birth without any ceremony. But if the mother had been unfortunate and lost a number of children previously, a ceremony accompanied by beer and prayers for the child's welfare would be held, the priest (Magaji Elenowum) being summoned for the occasion.

[1] A "malam" is a Muslim teacher. [2] Lahadi or Ladi = Sunday.